THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) In order to meet the requirements of the passengers, this Ministry has decided to set up 100 Budget Hotels all over the Indian Railways network. These hotels will be set up on competitive and transparent bidding system on Public Private Partnership by Indian Railway Catering & Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) in the vicinity of the Railway Stations. The Railway land for Budget Hotel would be given to the IRCTC by the Railways with a certain revenue return in the form of revenue sharing and fixed land rental. The licensed period will be of 30 years.

MoU between India and China regarding high speed trains

1651. SHRI DARA SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state

(a) whether it is a fact that China has achieved the highest train speed of 275 kilometer per hour while highest recorded speed in India, so far, is 150 kilometer per hour by the Shatabdi Express between Delhi and Agra;

(b) if so, whether any Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between officials of the two countries during recent Prime Minister's visit to China; and

(c) by when Indian Railways is expected to put our Railways on fast track including setting up of the ambitious dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC) project across the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) (a) China has achieved commercial speeds higher than 275 kilometer per hour in Maglev trains.

(b) A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed for technical cooperation in rail sectors.

(c) Dedicated Freight Corridor Project on Eastern Route (from Ludhiana to Dankuni) and Western Route (from Jawaharlal Nehru Port near Mumbai to Dadri/Tughlakabad) have been approved. They are targeted for completion in about 5 years after the start of construction of the Project.

Feasibility studies for other Dedicated Freight Corridor Routes on North-South, East-West, East Coast and Southern Corridors are being undertaken.

Extension of Trains

1652. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Andhra Pradesh Government had requested his Ministry for extension of Secunderabad-Kurnool-Tungbhadra Express to Kadapa, Hyderabad-Nizamuddin Express to Amritsar and Kachegudar-Egmore Express to Thiruvananthapuram *via* Madurai and Nagercoil;

(b) if so, the latest position in this regard; and

(c) by when this request is likely to materialized?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) These requests were examined but not found feasible due to operational and resource constraints.